

IMPROVEMENT OF SENATE CHAMBER

LETTER

FROM

THE ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL

TRANSMITTING

A REPORT ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SENATE
CHAMBER AND DRAWINGS ILLUSTRATING
THE PROPOSED MODIFICATION

IN COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 231,
SIXTY-EIGHTH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION,
AGREED TO JUNE 7, 1924



DECEMBER 2, 1924.—Referred to the Committee on Rules
and ordered to be printed with illustrations

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
1924

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A REPORT ON THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE SENATE
CHAMBER AND DRAWINGS ILLUSTRATING
THE PROPOSED MODIFICATION

IN COMPLIANCE WITH SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 10,
SIXTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION,
AGREED TO JUNE 7, 1904



DESIGNED BY THE ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
AND ORDERED TO BE PRINTED WITH ILLUSTRATIONS

WASHINGTON
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

1924

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL,
Washington, D. C., December 1, 1924.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
Washington, D. C.

SIR: In compliance with Senate Resolution 231, Sixty-eighth Congress, first session, agreed to June 7, 1924, directing the Architect of the Capitol to consult with architects of reputation and repute with a view to improving the living conditions of the Senate Chamber and including a plan to place the Chamber in direct contact with the outer wall or walls of the building, I beg to report that I have conferred with Carrere & Hastings and herewith present, as a part of my report, the plans for the relocation of the Senate Chamber accompanied by a report of the architects referred to.

Respectfully,

DAVID LYNN,
Architect of the Capitol.

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
WASHINGTON, D. C., December 8, 1932

THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D. C.

I am in compliance with Senate Resolution 221, Sixty-eighth Congress, first session, agreed to June 7, 1921, directing the Architect of the Capitol to consult with architects of reputation and report with a view to improving the living conditions of the Senate Chamber and including a plan to place the Chamber in direct contact with the outer wall or walls of the building. I beg to report that I have conferred with Carver W. Hastings and herewith present as a part of my report the plans for the relocation of the Senate Chamber accompanied by a report of the architect referred to.

Respectfully,

DAVID HAZEN
Architect of the Capitol

SENATE RESOLUTION 231

Resolved, That the Architect of the Capitol be authorized and directed, under the supervision of the Senate Committee on Rules, to consult with architects of repute and expert in ventilation and acoustics with a view to improving the living conditions of the Senate Chamber and giving attention to rearrangement and reconstruction, including a plan to place the Chamber in direct contact with the outer wall or walls of the building, and to report with plans to the President pro tempore of the Senate on the first Monday of December, 1924. The expenses hereunder, not to exceed the sum of \$10,000, shall be paid out of the contingent fund of the Senate.

SENATE RESOLUTION 351

Resolved, That the Architect of the Capitol be authorized and directed under the supervision of the Senate Committee on Labor to consult with architects of record and report in consultation and accordance with the views of the Senate on the design, construction, and maintenance of the Capitol building, and to report with plans and specifications, including a plan of the building, to the Senate on or before the first Monday of the month of December, 1934. The expense incurred in the preparation of the report shall be paid out of the contingent fund of the Senate.

IMPROVEMENT OF SENATE CHAMBER

NEW YORK, *November 28, 1924.*

DEAR SIR: In conformity with your request, pursuant to the resolution of the Senate (S. Res. 231), we beg to submit herewith four drawings illustrating the proposed modification of the Senate Chamber and the space immediately adjoining. These drawings are:

A plan of the principal floor.

A plan of the gallery floor.

Longitudinal section.

Transverse section.

In our development of the plan, as directed by the above resolution, to bring the Senate Chamber forward to the outside wall of the building, thereby obtaining windows and direct communication with outside air and light, we are happy to say the structure of the building lends every assistance to this change, and no material structural changes will be required to carry out the design herewith submitted.

It is of interest to note that the idea of relocating the Senate Chamber in direct communication with the exterior of the building was suggested by Mr. Thomas U. Walter, architect, in a report to the Senate in 1857 as the result of a study to improve the acoustics of the Chamber and to render its atmosphere more healthful.

In our study of the proposed change we have earnestly endeavored to develop in general plan and detail a scheme well adapted to its use and purpose and at the same time dignified in character and in complete harmony with its surroundings.

From every consideration of practicability, architectural treatment, and acoustics, from the standpoint of both speakers and hearers, we believe the half-circle or amphitheater form with coved ceiling offers the happiest and most satisfactory solution of the problem.

In the character or style of the architecture adopted, we have adhered strictly to the best traditions of the early part of the nineteenth century as evolved from the highest development of classical types.

This style is admirably adapted to the simple but dignified treatment essential to so important and integral a part of our Capitol Building, as is so well illustrated by the treatment of the so-called "Statuary Hall" in the Capitol Building, originally built, we believe, for use by the House of Representatives.

The half-circle form of the Senate Chamber provides an exceptional opportunity to introduce on the north side a sculptural motive, in bas-relief, possibly of an important historical event, although this is not an essential feature of the design.

You will note, by referring to the plans, we have indicated the relocating of the corridor, at present on the south outside wall of

the Senate wing, so as to center with the two flights of staircases, thus providing additional useful rooms adjoining the outside wall, with a similar arrangement at the gallery level.

We have also provided a wide passage for general circulation back of the wall of the Senate Chamber with a window at either end. The redistribution of the rooms themselves will show on the plans.

Three very wide windows passing through the two stories have been shown in the north wall. These openings can be made to compose in a simple way with the general character of the exterior wall and involve only slight structural modifications.

The placing of these window openings in the north wall behind the line of the colonnade provides agreeable outside lighting of diffused quality free from direct sun and glare.

While, as previously mentioned, the general form of the Chamber is admirable from an acoustical standpoint in the further development of the scheme, the most careful attention would be given to the study of details as required to insure the most satisfactory acoustical results.

Adequate and effective mechanical ventilation must be provided to supplement natural ventilation from outside atmospheric sources. This is essential for the health as well as the comfort of those whose duties require dependence on such ventilation, sometimes for extended periods, under varying atmospheric conditions.

It does not appear that the present mechanical equipment could be utilized, by extension or relocation, with satisfactory results.

Scientific research and improvement in mechanical equipment during recent years has done much to advance the development of adequate methods of ventilating, particularly under conditions where a reasonable amount of control to suit the preference of individual Senators is to be desired.

The further development of the proposed changes should, therefore, include a most careful and thorough study of the heating and ventilation requirements in the light of the most advanced and efficient practice.

In our opinion, after consultation with responsible builders of large experience, the cost of these proposed changes, exclusive of special ventilating and heating equipment, would require the appropriation by Congress of the sum of \$450,000.

Whereas the relocating of the Senate Chamber in direct contact with outside light and air would do much to provide more satisfactorily for the proper ventilation of the chamber than is possible under the present conditions, nevertheless, to insure adequate and effective ventilation under all atmospheric conditions it would be necessary to install such mechanical heating and ventilating equipment as the above-mentioned study of the conditions may seem to warrant.

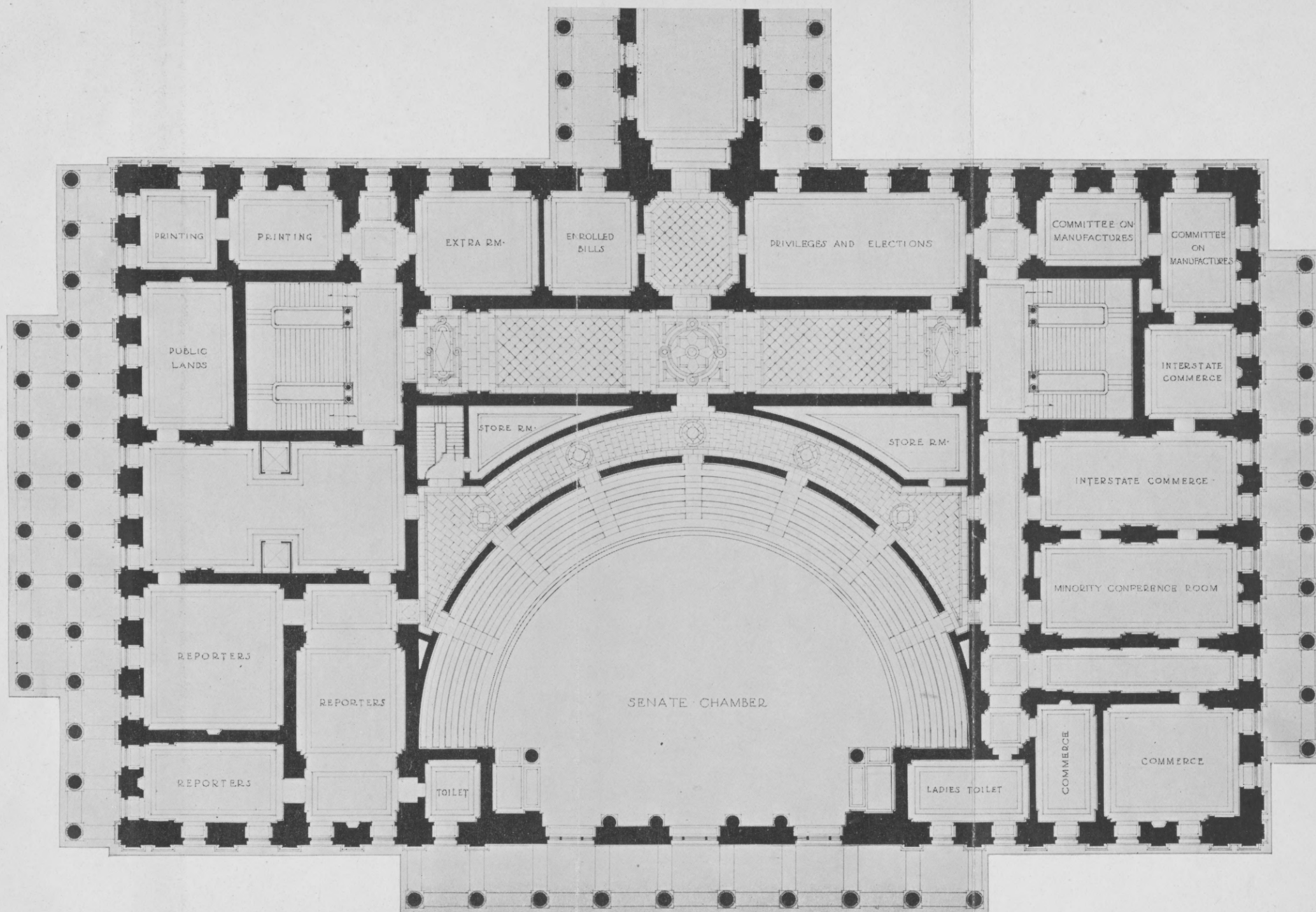
The cost of this equipment would, of course, depend upon the degree of its completeness and refinement.

Respectfully submitted.

CARRERE & HASTINGS.

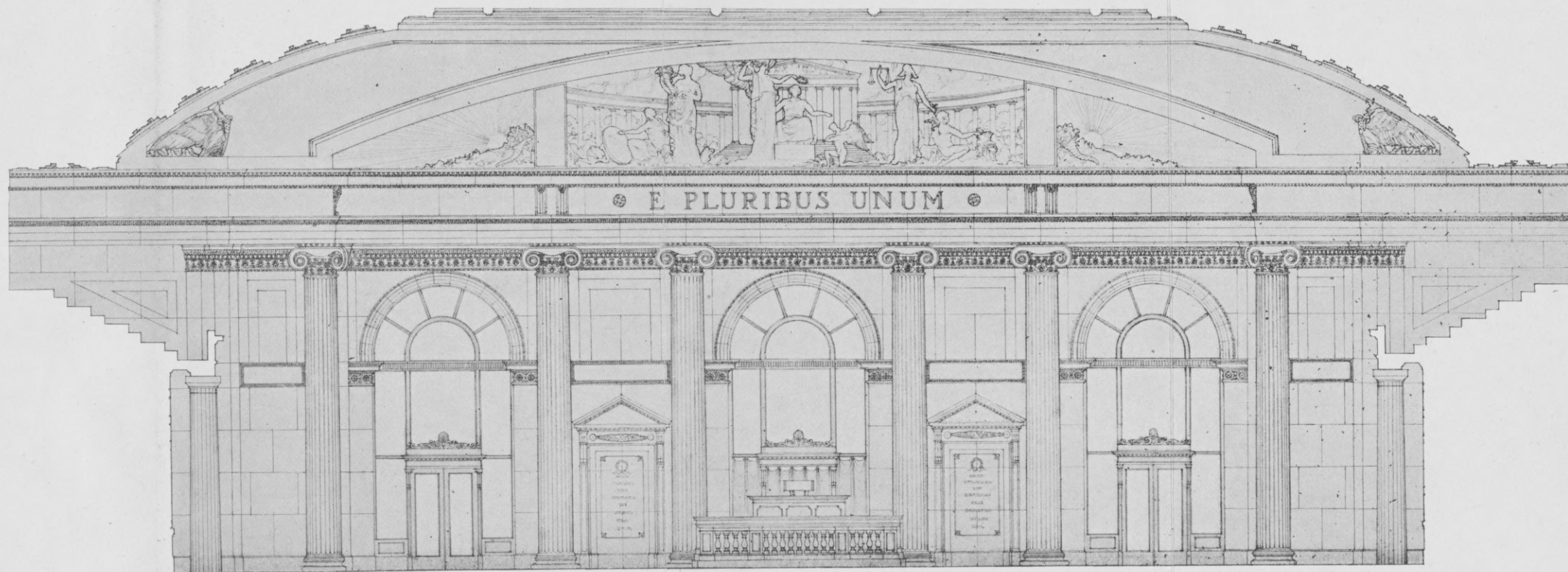
DAVID LYNN, Esq.,

Architect of the Capitol, Washington, D. C.



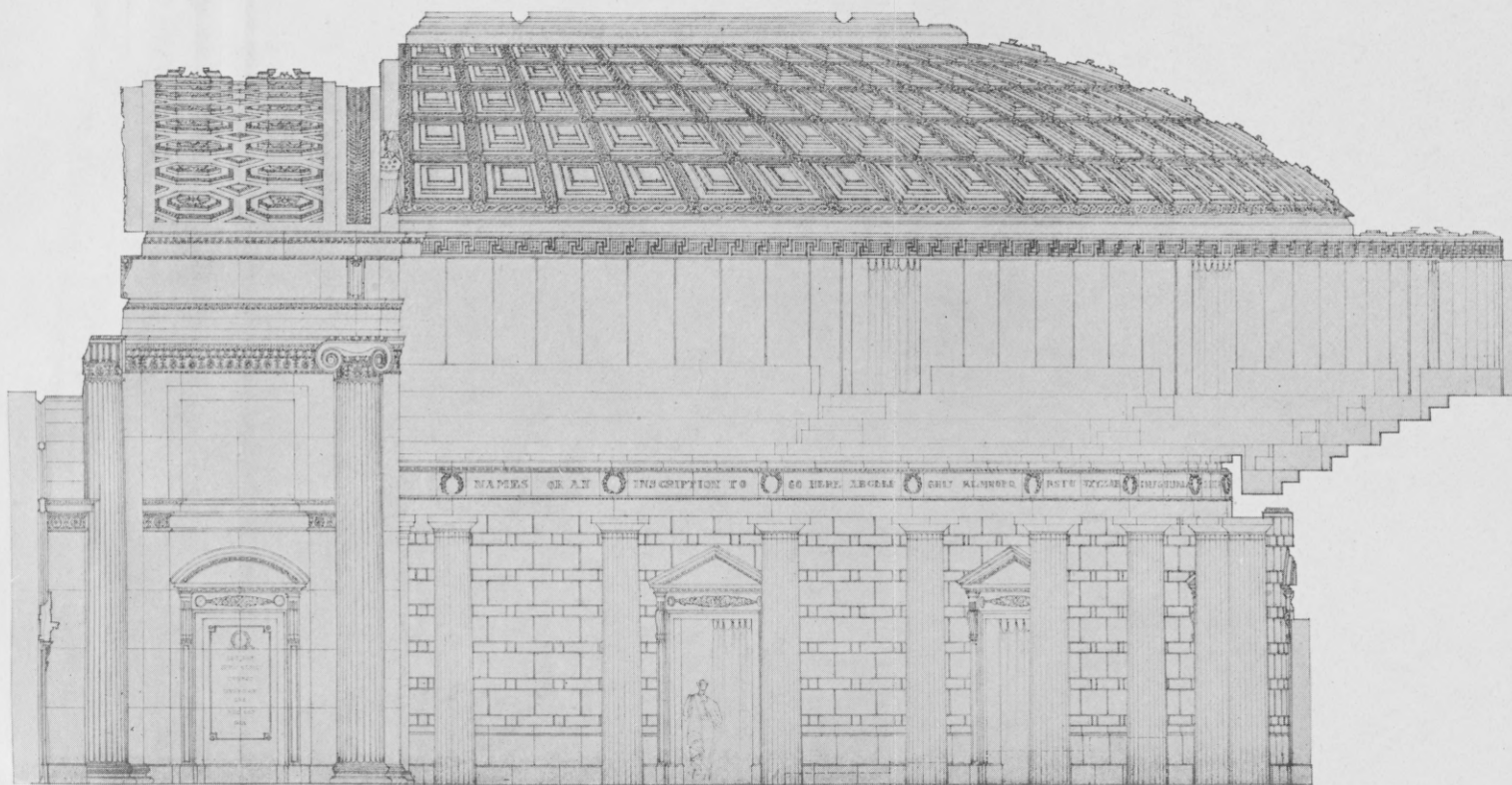
GALLERY FLOOR PLAN. RELOCATION OF SENATE CHAMBER, UNITED STATES CAPITOL

DAVID LYNN, ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
CARRERE & HASTINGS, CONSULTING ARCHITECTS



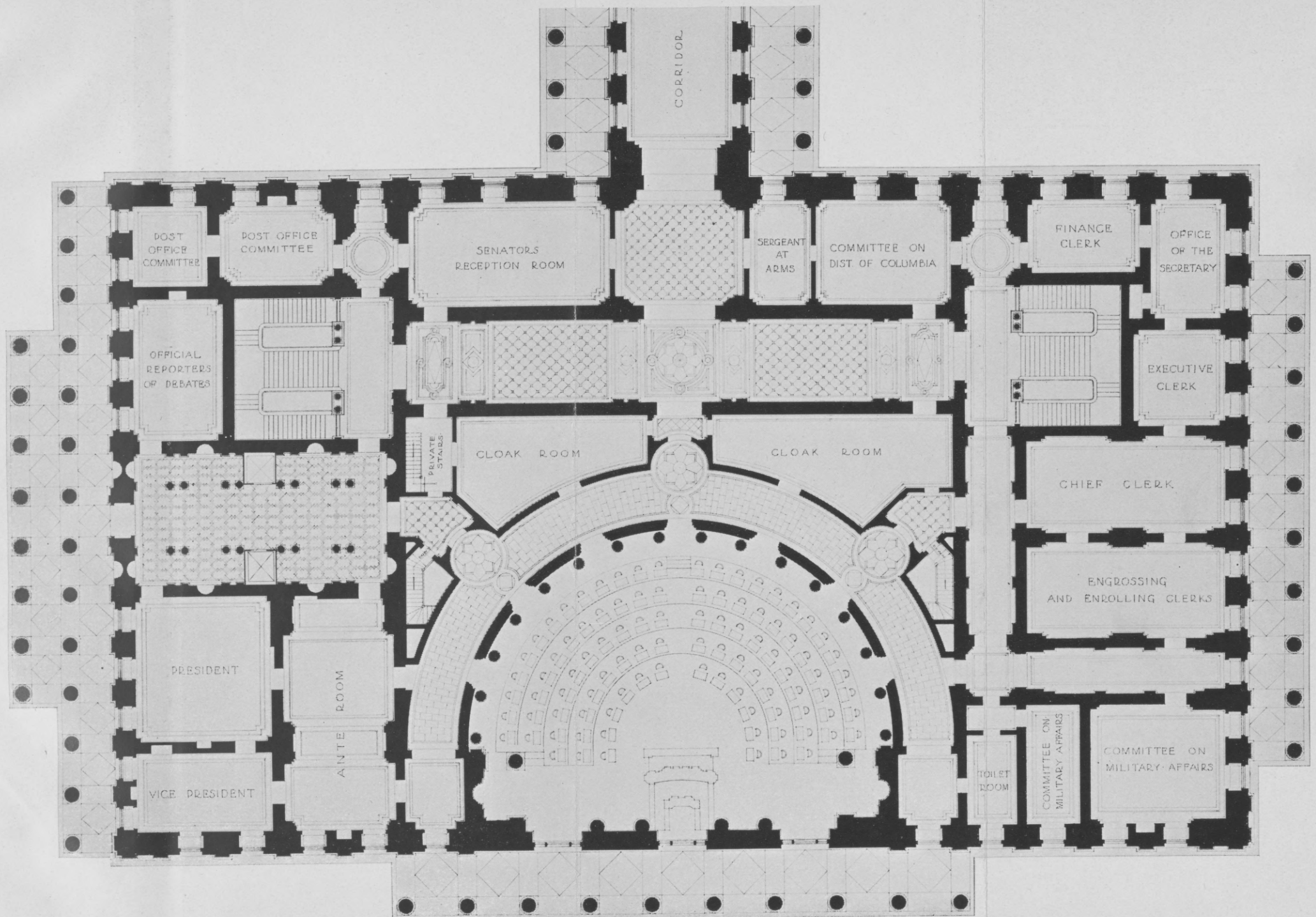
LONGITUDINAL SECTION. RELOCATION OF SENATE CHAMBER, UNITED STATES CAPITOL

DAVID LYNN, ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
CARRERE & HASTINGS, CONSULTING ARCHITECTS



TRANSVERSE SECTION. RELOCATION OF SENATE CHAMBER, UNITED STATES CAPITOL

DAVID LYNN, ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
CARRERE & HASTINGS, CONSULTING ARCHITECTS



PRINCIPAL FLOOR PLAN. RELOCATION OF SENATE CHAMBER, UNITED STATES CAPITOL

DAVID LYNN, ARCHITECT OF THE CAPITOL
CARRERE & HASTINGS, CONSULTING ARCHITECTS